

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Better Access to Safe Water

Improved access to safe water supply for at least 85,000 Kosovo citizens is the target of USAID's new water and sanitation program, launched with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on January 30. The MOU formalizes the partnership between USAID's Small Infrastructure for Water and Sanitation Program and Regional Water Companies in four municipalities, including Glogoc/Glogovac, Malishevë/Malisevo, Klinë/Klina and Pejë/Pec.



Ms. Patricia Rader, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director, signs the MOU between municipality of Pejë/Pec, Klinë/Klina, Malishevë/Malisevo, Glogoc/Glogovac, respective Regional Water Companies and IRD.

The program is designed to work with local government authorities, Regional Water Companies, and the Association of Regional Water Companies (SHUKOS) to improve access to safe water supply for the residents of these municipalities. The program will mobilize and commit approximately \$6.2 million, including cost-sharing from municipalities and communities.

The project is implemented by International Relief and Development (IRD) and its local partner, Community Development Fund (CDF). The partnership is part of USAID's assistance to improve and expand infrastructure across Kosovo.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Working in Partnership

A "road-show" is underway across Kosovo, as USAID's private sector development activity presents businesses/future project partners with plans to help develop Kosovo's economy.

The series of presentations started at the of January and will continue in February, reaching businesses in Peja/Pec, Ferizaj/Urosevac, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gjakova/Djakovica and Prizren.

The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program will work in several business sectors with potential for growth in Kosovo. The primary sectors to be targeted are ones that are believed to have the greatest potential for growth and for increasing employment in Kosovo: agriculture (including dairy, poultry, fruit, vegetables, and non-wood forest products), road construction and construction materials, forestry and wood processing, and information and communications technology. Additionally, the Kosovo Private Enterprise Program will work with smaller sectors that show potential for future growth, including tourism, recycling, fabricated metals and decorative stones.

The activity is a four-year program designed to develop private sector businesses and business support services in the targeted sectors, and to improve the environment in which business works (helping associations and others advocate for regulations or legislation to make it easier for business to function).

USAID's Kosovo Private Enterprise Program is implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton.

RULE OF LAW

Model Courts: A Year in Review

Electronic case inventories and detailed plans for backlog reduction are a few of the achievements in the first year of the USAID-supported model court program.

The six courts have adopted action plans targeting improvements in administration, backlog reduction, case filing and records management, public communications, and logistics. These plans, and other actions designed to help the Kosovo courts, are being developed by the court staff in partnership with USAID's Justice Support Program. Court improvement teams, composed of judges and administrative staff, have worked in close cooperation with the USAID project's Model Court Liaisons, who have spearheaded local leadership of reform utilizing best practices in the field of court administration.

In the coming year, participating courts will continue to design and implement needed reforms to become successful models for other Kosovo courts.

The reforms will include improvements from job descriptions of Presiding Judges and Court Administrators to a definition of responsibilities of other positions in the court's administrative structure. Additionally, backlog reduction plans will be implemented and progress tracked. Public orientation signs will be installed and public information areas established. Renovations will be carried out to improve public access, case management and archival systems, and courtroom usage. Brochures and forms will also be made available to improve public access overall and to improve public perception of court operations.

The courts participating in the program include a commercial court, two district courts and three municipal courts. The model courts program is part of USAID's Justice Support Program, a three-year activity designed to help strengthen the judiciary system in Kosovo. The Justice Support Program is implemented by National Center for State Courts.

Kosovo Celebrates Law Day

Kosovo celebrated its first annual Law Day on January 16th. Law Day is celebrated in many countries around the world to acknowledge the importance of laws and justice as the foundation of a democratic state.

The celebration also remembered and honored the day in the year 2000 when judges and prosecutors of the Pristina region were sworn in, thereby reestablishing a functioning justice system in Kosovo. Law Day in Kosovo will serve to educate the public on the achievements of the legal system including the various ministries and institutions; highlight the new Constitution; and celebrate progress and changes in the rule of law.

"Kosovo, as a new independent and sovereign state, will be an important partner in promoting the highest values that help the realization of justice", said H.E. President Fatmir Sejdiu in his remarks to 500 law practitioners who were present at the event's opening ceremony."

The President of Kosovo was joined by Patricia Rader, USAID Director for Kosovo; Nekibe Kelmendi, Minister of Justice; Rexhep Haxhimusa, President of the Supreme

Court and the Kosovo Judicial Council; and Bernard Rabatel, Deputy Head of Justice with EU Law Mission (EULEX), who also addressed the guests at the ceremony.

The official ceremony was followed by a mock trial carried out by students of the Law Faculty of the University of Prishtina. The day also included legal counseling for interested participants and a "justice fair," where 15 organizations displayed their publications to and shared information with the public.



Fifteen Kosovo organizations displayed educational material for guests of the Justice Fair organized for Kosovo Law Day.

Law Day ended with an open debate with over 100 people attending. The panel consisted of Musa Dragusha, President of Kosovo Chamber of Advocates; Ymer Huruglica, President of Kosovo Judges Association; Hava Ismailji, Dean of the Law Faculty; Drita Rexhepi, Coordinator of Legal Aid Commission; Lavdim Krasniqi, Director of Kosovo Judicial Institute; and Hilmi Jashari, Kosovo's Acting Ombudsperson. The debate was welcomed by the public, especially law faculty students.

The celebration of Law Day 2009 in Kosovo was organized under the patronage of the Ministry of Justice, with the support of the ABA Rule of Law Initiative, the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates and the Kosovo Judges Association. The ABA Rule of Law Initiative implements the USAID Legal Professional Development Initiative.

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